Jeremiah 7:1-15

*“A Message From The Church Steps”*

Chapters 7-10 are called by some, “Jeremiah’s Temple Sermon.”

It was given at the gates of the Temple.

Introduction:

1. Jeremiah chapter 7 is a Reformation chapter.

2. God commanded Jeremiah to preach at the Temple gate.

3. If Jeremiah were to stand on the steps of the churches in America, what would he say?

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**I. “I WANT REALITY, NOT RITUAL” 7:1-4**

 ***A. Reality Is Based On God’s Word 1,2***

*The word came…Proclaim there this word…Hear the word of the Lord*

**1. It Is Authoritative…**this doesn’t contain God’s Word. It is God’s Word.

 **2. It Is Absolute…**Since God is absolutely true. His Word is absolute truth.

 To move from ritual to reality, it is essential that we get back to the Word. We don’t

 need pithy stories. Nor do we need political motivation, entertainment

 or clever marketing**. We need God’s Word!**

 ***B. Reality Is Based On God’s Way 3***

 **1. Amend** *Amend your ways.* Amend what you are doing. This is repentance!

 **2. Adjust** Adjust your life to obey. You can’t continue to live for yourself. You

 can’t continue with the same perspective and the same priorities.

 ***C. Reality Is Based On God’s Witness 4***

What does God see and hear?

1. *Trust not in lying words…*That always happens when we forsake absolute truth.
2. Their trust was in the Temple, not the living God. *This is the temple of the Lord…*

 *The temple of the Lord…these building are assuredly the temple of the Lord…*

 This was rote and ritualism.

1. First understand that Jeremiah’s message is to religious people. They were devout on their way to church with a scroll under their arm.
2. God wants to do something in the heart of His people. *“This is the temple…”* The people had taken their faith in the living God and reduced it to faith in a building. Their Temple Theology had nothing to say about holy living or how to live!
3. v. 4, v. 8 *But look you are trusting in deceptive words that are worthless.* We trust in church membership: “I am a member of…” We trust in baptism: “I was baptized.” “I have devotions*.”* Don’t trust in an experience, church membership, attendance, religious activity… **trust in Christ alone!**

If Jeremiah were to stand on the steps of the churches in America, what would he say?

**II. “I WANT RELATIONSHIPS, NOT RITUAL” 7:5-7**

 ***A. Callousness Is Evident 5*** *Execute justice between a man and his neighbor.*

**1.** Is there something between you and another believer?

 **2.** It is called restitution. Make things right. Profession and conduct must go

 together.

 ***B. Compassion Is Missing 6,7***

**1.** *If…If…If…*

**2.** How do we treat the weakest of our society? There should be a concern for the

 stranger, the fatherless and widows.

 **3.** God wants us to move out of our comfort zones. He wants us to embrace the

 hurting.

If Jeremiah were to stand on the steps of the churches in America, what would he say?

**III. “I WANT RIGHTEOUSNESS, NOT RITUAL” 7:8-11**

 *There are several problem areas:*

***A. The Truth 8*** *We must not trust in lying words.*

**1.** We have no standard apart from the Word.

**2.** What is right or wrong? Who says? With drugs and alcohol there is a God-

 shaped emptiness that they are trying to fill.

***B. The Tendency 9*** *Sin is no longer sinful!*

**1.** This is a catalog of the sins of God’s people.

 **2.** They violated virtually every one of the 10 commandments.

 \*The first is thou shalt have no other gods before Me. (They followed other

 gods. v. 9)

 \*No idols…Judah burned incense to Baal.

 \*Do not take the name of the Lord in vain. *They profaned the house that bore*

 *His name.*

\*Honor the Sabbath…They gave fake worship on the day of worship.

 \*What about the commandments of human relationships: *Honor your parents,*

but they neglected the responsibility of the fatherless and widow. *You shall not*

 *Murder…commit adultery…steal or give false testimony.* All of these are

 mentioned in v. 9

 **3.** They violated every command, then they went to worship in the house of God as

 if they had done nothing wrong. They thought they could spend six days breaking

 God’s commandments and act as though they were godly!

 ***C. The Tug 10***

**1.** Here is what God wants to know: How could you do all these…*then come and*

 *stand before Me…we are safe to do these detestable things.*

**2.** God’s people used God’s house as a haven.

 ***D. The Tragedy 11*** *Has this house which bears my name become a den of thieves?*

**1.**What we are comes with us!

**2.** The people operated on the assumption that God neither saw nor cared what they did

 during the week*.*

**3.** *I have been watching…even have I seen…*God knows all.

If Jeremiah were to stand on the steps of the churches in America, what would he say?

**IV. “I WANT REMEMBRANCE, NOT RITUAL” 7:12-15**

Jeremiah takes Judah to Shiloh for a history lesson.

 ***A. Stop And See 12***

**1. Shiloh...God Was There 12**

\*The Ark of God’s presence stayed at Shiloh for many years.

 \*See what I did…If God’s people went to Shiloh in Jeremiah’s day all they would

 see was a pile of rubble.

 **2. Shiloh Wasn’t There and Neither Was God.**

 **\***Psalm 78:58-60 Shiloh is the place where God once was and is no longer.

 \*Shiloh represents the absence and abandonment of God along with the end of

 His worship. The people of Jerusalem thought that such a disaster would never

 happen. They could not imagine the temple ever being destroyed.

 ***B. Stop And Speak 13***

**1.** *I spoke..***When God speaks...listen!!!**

 **2.** *You heard not…*I called you, but you did not answer.

***C. Stop And Search 14,15***

**1.** *I will do to you what I did to them.*

**2.** v. 14 They trusted in a building, not the living God. Watch what you trust. It will be tested.

 *\**The living God does not dwell in buildings.

 \*No building, no church, no congregation has a permanent hold on His presence.

**What the church needs is not more building programs or new methods of church growth.**

**THEY WILL GO!**

***What the church needs is the living presence of the living God!!!***

Rev. 3:20 Jesus stands at the door and knocks: *Let Me In!*